

The Day I Was Beckoned Into a Watercolor

Betty L. Beer

It was in Kabul that I was invited into a John Singer Sargent watercolor. Oh, the man was as handsome as that work of art with Aryan blue eyes that pierced from jet black browd.

Not Sargent's Bedouin blue, but wrapped in white, he was sitting on white surrounded by white. "He wants to kiss you," his deputy whispered, offering twenty-five percent off anything in the store down the street.

I stood there, curious, surprised, ignoring the bribe. He was bareheaded, taller, surrounded by standing, curious, robed elders in tan Pashtun hats.

I paused. Well I'm sure as heck not going to kiss him back.

I pointed to my cheek.

He sighed, pushed off his chair, approached sideways, quickly leaned over, kissed my cheek, then fell back into his chair, arms outstretched, a chorus of "Ahhhh" as the men drew back in relief and wonder at the bravery of it.